

**REMARKS**

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

**Status of Claims:**

No claims are currently being cancelled.

Claims 1 - 6 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-6 remain pending in this application.

**Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:**

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 2, 3, 5 and 6. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 have been amended to place those claims in better form for U.S. Patent Practice, whereby the scope of these claims is not believed to have been materially affected based on these amendments. Thus, claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 are still believed to be in allowable form.

**Claim Rejections – Prior Art:**

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,862,463 to Ishizawa et al. in view of JP 62273591A to Keiji Itaya. This rejection is traversed with respect to presently pending claims 1 and 4, for at least the reasons given below.

The following description of the present invention according to claims 1 and 4 is made with reference to elements labeled in the present drawings and described in the specification with respect to an exemplary embodiment, for ease in understanding the invention according to claims 1 and 4. This description with respect to the exemplary embodiment of the invention is not meant to limit the invention according to claims 1 and 4 to just include the exemplary embodiment, but rather to describe the invention according to

claims 1 and 4 so that the distinguishing features over the cited art of record can be readily understood.

This present invention according to claims 1 and 4 includes a temperature detector 20 for detecting a temperature  $T_A$  of a heating roller 13 surface in a first region through which paper of small width passes, and a temperature detector 21 for detecting a temperature  $T_B$  of a heating roller 13 surface in a second region through which paper of small width does not pass where paper of large width is carried, and as warming up operation is continued, temperatures of heating roller surfaces in the both regions are detected, and when the temperature  $T_A$  or  $T_B$  detected by the temperature detector 20 or 21 for detecting the temperature of the heating roller 13 surface in either region reaches the temperature WUC or WUS capable of fixing, a ready display is lighted.

According to the above construction, unevenness in temperature in the lengthwise direction of the heating roller 13 immediately after termination of the warming up operation and under chute phenomenon at the time of copying operation can be reduced, and a poor image such as due to poor fixing is prevented from occurring, and whereby the warming up time can be shortened. See page 7, last full paragraph of the specification, for example.

Turning now to the cited art of record, Ishizawa et al. discloses a fixing apparatus including a first temperature detecting means 18 formed by a temperature detecting element 15 provided at a portion of an outer periphery of the heat roller  $h_a$  and a sensor head 17 disposed so as to be able to oppose to the temperature detecting element 15, a second temperature detecting means 19 formed by a plurality of temperature detecting elements disposed at a constant interval therebetween along an axial direction of the heat roller  $h_a$  and spaced from the outer periphery of the heat roller  $h_a$ , and a control means 20 for controlling turning-on and turning-off of the heater 14 in accordance with either one of outputs from the first and second temperature detecting means 18, 19 (see Figures 2 and 3 of Ishizawa et al.).

Keiji Itaya (JP 62-273591 A) discloses that a fixing roller 6 is heated preliminarily by a heater portion 18 (step 302), and when temperature in the surface of the fixing roller 6 reaches the prescribed temperature, a ready display showing capability of copying operation is lighted (step 303) (see the upper right column in page 3 of the specification and Figure 3 of that reference).

Ishizawa et al. discloses that there are provided a temperature detector (corresponding to the second temperature detecting means 19) for detecting a temperature of a heating roller surface in a first region through which paper of small width passes and a temperature detector (corresponding to the first temperature detecting means 18) for detecting a temperature of a heating roller surface in a second region through which paper of small width does not pass. However, Ishizawa et al. does not disclose or suggest that when the temperature of the heating roller surface in either the first or the second region reaches the temperature capable of fixing, a ready display is lighted.

Meanwhile, Itaya discloses that when the temperature of the heating roller surface reaches the temperature capable of fixing, a ready display is lighted. However, Itaya does not disclose or suggest that temperatures of heating roller surfaces in both a first and a second region through which paper of small width passes and through which paper of small width does not pass are detected.

Therefore, even if Ishizawa et al. and Itaya are combined, it would not be possible for one skilled in the art to reach the idea that when a temperature of a heating roller surface in either a first or a second region reaches the temperature capable of fixing, the ready display is lighted.

Further, Ishizawa et al. controls turning on and turning-off of heaters 14 so as to make temperature of the heating roller surface constant along an axial direction. However, Ishizawa et al. is not concerned that a temperature of the heating roller surface in a region that has reached the temperature capable of fixing does not lower rapidly.

Therefore, in Ishizawa et al., even if a ready display is lighted, the ready display must be lighted when temperature of the heating roller surface becomes a constant along the axial direction.

Accordingly, the present invention according to claims 1 and 4 is patentable over the combination of Ishizawa et al. and Itaya.

**Conclusion:**

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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